

CLEANING EQUIPMENT

This invention relates to cleaning equipment in which cleaning liquid is taken from container, for example a bucket, and returned thereto after it has been used for dirt removal. It is of particular, but by no means exclusive, application to a cleaning bucket for use with a cleaning element or device, such as floor mop, cleaning cloth or chamois leather which is repeatedly wrung out into the bucket.

A problem with such cleaning equipment is that dirt deposited out from the liquid collects at the bottom of the container and that disturbance of the liquid, as when rinsing out a mop for example, washes the collected dirt back into the main body of the liquid. In addition a cleaning element such as a mop can pick up the collected dirt directly. Because of this the container is often emptied and cleaned out before the cleaning additives in the liquid are actually exhausted.

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According to the present invention there is provided cleaning equipment comprising a container for cleaning liquid, a wringer mounted on or in the container, a partition element dividing the container into a first compartment which, in use, receives liquid wrung out in the wringer and a second compartment which, in use, receives cleaning liquid and a dirt receiving element for receiving dirt settling from the cleaning liquid in use contained in the second compartment.

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Preferably, the partition element has a part defining the base of the second compartment. This part is preferably apertured and the dirt receiving element is preferably located below the said apertured part of the partition element.

5 Advantageously, the first and second compartments communicate with one another *via* the dirt receiving element.

Conveniently, the partition element is removable from the container to facilitate cleaning of the container and dirt receiving element.

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The dirt receiving element may comprise a mat or pad of superposed mesh layers or may be a non-woven unitary mesh comprising a “jumble” of interlocking or bonded fibres.

15 The invention will now be more particularly described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying diagrammatic drawing which illustrates, in vertical cross-section, one example of cleaning equipment according to the invention.

Referring to the drawing, the cleaning equipment shown therein is typically for
20 domestic use and comprises a container in the form of a bucket 1, a basket-like wringer 2 including a support flange 8 removably mounted on the upper lip of the bucket 1 so as to cover only a part of the upper end of the bucket 1, and a partition element 3 which divides the bucket 1 into a first compartment 4 which receives liquid wrung out in the

wringer 2 and a second compartment 5 which receives cleaning liquid, e.g. clean water and a flocculant chemical.

The partition element 3 curves gently away from the wringer 2 in a downwards direction and has a flat lower part 3a which defines the base of the second compartment 5.

The part 3a of the partition element 3 is provided with a plurality of apertures and a dirt receiving element 6 is located below the part 3a of the partition element 3. The dirt receiving element 6 may be secured to the underside of the part 3a of the partition element, typically by adhesive.

The element 6 is a three dimensional fibrous mesh structure (or reticulated foam structure) and may comprise a mat or pad of superposed mesh layers or may be a non-woven unitary mesh comprising a “jumble” of interlocking or bonded fibres.

The first and second compartments 4 and 5, respectively, communicate with one another *via* the element 6 and the apertures in the part 3a of the partition element 3. Thus, the water level in each of the two compartments 4 and 5 will maintain the same level and the water level in the first compartment 4 will not exceed that in the compartment 5 as cleaning liquid is wrung out in the wringer 2.

The flocculant chemical draws small particles out of the suspension and these particles, together with heavier dirt particles settle into the filter.

The form of the element 6 is such that disturbances in the liquid cannot wash back out into the body of the liquid, to any material extent, dirt particles which are deposited from the liquid and which settle into the inter-fibre spaces of the element 6.

- 5 In fact the act of rinsing the cleaning element in the compartment 5 creates a bellows effect producing turbulence to drive the dirt particles into the compartment 4. There is little turbulence in compartment 4 so there is little or no flow back from compartment 4 to compartment 5.

- 10 The partition element 3 is removable from within the bucket 1 to facilitate cleaning of the bucket and fits behind a depending flange 7 on the wringer support flange 8. Movement of the partition element 3 towards the first compartment 4 is restrained.

- 15 In use, a mop or other cleaning implement is rinsed out in the cleaning liquid in the second compartment 5 and is then wrung out in the wringer 2. The mop or other cleaning implement is then used to clean, for example, a work surface and then rinsed again in the cleaning liquid in the second compartment.

- 20 Dirt removed from the cleaning implement during a rinsing operation is trapped in the dirt receiving element 6. This avoids the need to change the cleaning liquid too frequently.

Ideally, the dirt receiving element is a re-usable unit which can be replaced in the container after removal therefrom and washing out of the collected dirt.

Also, the bucket may be of transparent plastics material for observation of the
5 water condition.

The above embodiment is given by way of example only and various modifications will be apparent to persons skilled in the art without departing from the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims. For example, the wringer
10 could be mounted on a ledge in the bucket rather than be mounted on the upper lip of the bucket.

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